



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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IM Technical Committee Conference Call

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Interoperability Montana Technical Committee (IMTC) held a conference call on Monday, Dec. 17, to address unfinished agenda items from its last face-to-face meeting. Valley County sought confirmation that the radios it is purchasing will work on the IM system, and there was consensus that they would.

Roger Smith, Kevin Bruski, Bob McWilliams and Wing Spooner worked on best practice standards for RF Conditioning and alarms/monitoring. These were reviewed in detail and modifications made to them. The best practices were formally approved.

It was reported that Richland County has accepted a quote for work on the Fox Creek site. The IMTC approved the quote as well as optional tower lighting work that may be necessary after the tower is inspected.

The group discussed best practices for logging recorders at some length. Language is being drafted to capture the group's views about what equipment the IM Project should provide. In general, the IMTC is looking at providing logging recorders at each master site and assigning a specified number of talk groups that each jurisdiction can record. If regional or local jurisdictions need to record more than what will be recorded at the master site, it will be the expense of local or regional jurisdictions to acquire additional logging recorders.

The next IMTC face-to-face meeting is Jan. 28, 2008.

Eastern Tier Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan pmohan@mt.gov

The Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium (ETIC) met on Dec. 19 at the Dawson County Courthouse in Glendive. Project Director, Chief Alan D. Michaels, chaired the meeting. Minutes from the last meeting were discussed and recommended for adoption for the next meeting. Chief Michaels thanked the group for their prompt participation in the Interlocal Agreement process and reiterated the benefits of the program to make the Interoperability Montana Project a legal entity.

Chief Michaels also thanked members for their prompt gathering of information to participate in the upcoming FEMA Assistance to Fire Fighters grant

which will assist the consortium in their build-out plan. Chief Michaels presented the group with a briefing on the Interoperability Montana Project Directors, Governance and Finance Sub-Committees. Chief Michaels pointed out the benefits of having approved leases and site user agreements in place when the 12 additional communications sites are selected for construction.

Chief Michaels and the board discussed the status of grant funding and how it applied to the consortium. Sheryl Evans, Northrop Grumman, briefed consortium members on the current status of the Interoperability Montana network and presented the group with updated maps of the network. Chief Michaels gave his congratulations to consortium members for their work in developing the link from the Northern Tier Consortium to Big Sky 11 through the Fallon, Makoshika, and Fox Creek sites. Chief Michaels stressed that acquisition of approved leases and continued attendance at the Interoperability Montana Technical Committee will lead to more sites being included in the overall network.

The next meeting will be held January 23, 2008, at 10:00 am at the Law Enforcement Training Center in Glendive.

I-15/90 Interoperability Consortium Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The I-15/90 Corridor Consortium met Thursday, Dec. 20, in Butte. Project Director Dave McPherson opened the meeting with a report from Jeff Miller on WSCA pricing for radios that will be purchased with the FEMA Assistance to Fire Fighters grant. Features such as water proofing, dual-head radios, and under-dash vs. remote-mount radios were discussed. Members decided they will include a radio port for AVL hardware that allows for tracking of vehicles and firefighters that are out in the field. Members also discussed the pros and cons of providing encrypted radios for all fire personnel vs. just for fire chiefs and incident commanders in the consortium. On Jan. 4, members of the consortium will meet again to make final decisions on the radio purchase.

Bob McWilliams gave a report on recent IM Technical Committee (IMTC) and budget meetings and Dave McPherson reported that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed



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between the consortium and the Interoperability Montana Project, so it is now an agent of county government. Bill Converse reported that Anaconda-Deer Lodge now has its trunking frequencies.

A special meeting will take place on Friday, Jan 4 at noon to finalize the radio purchase, and the next consortium meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 17 beginning at 10:00 am. Both meetings are at the Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St.

Western Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan pmohan@mt.gov

The Western Interoperability Communications Consortium (WICC) met at the Mineral County Courthouse in Superior on Tues., Dec. 18 at 10:00 am. Project Director George Gupton reviewed the consortium minutes and presented a review of the last Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) meeting minutes. Consortium members discussed the requirements of the Interlocal Agreement to obtain specific answers for county commissioners. After a thorough review, the group determined that questions had been answered and this portion of the Interoperability Montana Project could go forward.

George also addressed the Governance Sub-Committee efforts to make a recommendation to the IMPD regarding the selection of an executive officer to the board to conduct day-to-day business requirements. Mark Denke, Sanders County Representative, stated that the growth of the IM Project requires full-time attention to complete day-to-day business activities. The consensus of the group was that the overall IM Project is growing in size and scope and requires full-time attention to carrying out the board's approved requirements. Stephen Stanley, Lake County Representative, Jane Ellis and Erik Hoover, Ravalli County Representatives, reiterated that the project must be cost effective and remain in the control of local government.

Bob Reid, Missoula County Representative, gave a synopsis of the issues involved with the Miller Peak communications site as an example of changes needed to save money and to improve the building of sites. Tom Smith, Northrop Grumman, presented the board with the current communications site approval process being used

by the IMPD. The group assessed current WICC infrastructure needs and discussed the methodology of using the IMPD site approval process to build out WICC infrastructure.

The next meeting date is set for Tuesday at 10:00 am on January 22, 2008, at the Missoula County Courthouse.

Upcoming Meetings

January 3, 2008

Mobile Data Terminal Consortium

Bozeman • 10:00 am

Best Western City Center Motel, 507 W Main Street

January 3, 2008

Northern Tier – Combined Board and Tech Meeting

Havre • 9:00 am

Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st Street

January 7

IMGC Finance Committee

Helena • 9:00 am – Noon

DOC Annex Conference Room

Behind 515 N. Sanders Street

IM Governance Committee

Helena • Noon – 5:00 pm

DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

January 8

IM Project Directors Meeting

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol

January 9

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)

Great Falls • 10:00 am

Wheat Building; 750 6th Street S.W.

Please Note: The HAM will not be published next week because of the Christmas holiday. Please expect your next issue on Friday, Jan. 4, 2008. Happy New Year and thanks for your loyal readership!

